

Hall of Fame Inductees

Engineering Heritage Queensland

George Redvers WALKER

CEng(Ret) FIEAust FIPENZ FAIB

INDUCTED IN 2013

George Walker is a structural engineering academic and specialist in catastrophe risk and disaster insurance research with over 60 years' experience in the fields of earthquake and fluid mechanics.

Born in the small country town of Te Kuiti in New Zealand on 5 August 1938, George graduated in Civil Engineering from University of Auckland with First Class Honours in 1960, completing his Masters studies in turbulent flow one year later, completing his PhD in 1966 in earthquake engineering.

Following four years working as a design engineer in the prestressed concrete and nuclear power industries in 1968, George joined James Cook University (formerly known as the University College of Townsville) to teach structural engineering design – where he stayed for 21 years. He led the Commonwealth Government investigation of the damage to Darwin from Cyclone Tracy and played a major role in the implementation of the recommendations from the resulting report, which have subsequently had an impact on the wind resistant design of housing Australia wide.

From 1982, George became increasingly involved with the insurance industry in the estimation of the risk to insurance companies from catastrophes such as tropical cyclones and earthquakes. In the insurance world he has been one of the leaders in the application of engineering-based knowledge and methods to

the management of catastrophe insurance loss risk by insurance and reinsurance companies.

Within Engineers Australia, George was Chairman of the Townsville Regional Committee in 1974 and of the National Committee on Structural Engineering (preceding the Structural Engineering College) in 1986-87. He is a Life Member of the Australian Wind Engineering Society in which he continues to play an active role, having been its Chairman from 1987-91 and the Regional Secretary for the Asia Pacific Region of the International Association for Wind Engineering from 1979-83.

George was Chairman of the Australian Government's Construction Regulations and Standards Internationalisation Group from its foundation in 1991 until its termination in 1998, which laid the foundation for the present activities on alignment of building standards in the APEC region. In 2005, he was a member of the Prime Minister's Science Engineering and Innovation Council working group on tsunamis and since 1998 has been Chairman of ISO TC59/SC15 which is standardising parameters for describing the performance of single-family dwellings.

His primary current research interest is the application of the insurance-based modelling tools to decision making relating to adaptation to climate change, including changes in structural design codes.